



Glocon

...the Global and Local Community Conversation

WEEK 3 part 2
Dhaka, Bangladesh
February 15th –16th 2012

Foreword: appreciating, encouraging, and sharing local community story

This is a synthesis from two local community SALT visits in Dhaka, Bangladesh, the third location of the Glocon 'story'. Each location will have its own synthesis so we can accumulate insight on local and global patterns of community response and transfer, and organisational adaptation. The 'themes and sub themes that matter to us' are the core of Glocon learning. Sincere thanks to local and country hosts, and to the local communities, for showing the future.

Background

The 2 communities visited in Dhaka are participants with The Salvation Army. In 1993 Salvation Army members began visiting **Old Dhaka**, to women who were working in a brothel. Instead of a clinic, the women wanted conversation, education and vocational training. Talk ranged from HIV to health and healing of self-image. Gradually, some developed confidence that alternatives existed to sex work, and chose to move out to live in a local community. They found that they could be treated with respect. Many have developed family life and have influenced change in partners and husbands, children, youth, and their new neighbours.

Mirpur is a permanent camp for displaced Bihari people, with a church and community health and development programme. TSA arranged SALT visits to coincide with a meeting of CHGN Bangladesh.

Key Sections

- *Glocon visit team members*
- *Process*
- *Where are we now?*
- *Transfer*
- *Going deeper: themes and sub-themes that matter to us*

See www.affirmfacilitators.org; www.facebook.com/glocon.affirm;

See also the facebook group "Glocon participants". By end of February, the first update will be available through the www.affirmfacilitators.org website and the facebook page. The background to Glocon is described in the concept note, on the affirm website.



The Glocon visit team

- Zannah Jeffreys (UK)
- Alison Campbell-Glocon facilitator
- Ian Campbell –Glocon facilitator

Glossary

GP -Glocon Participants

SALT -Support and Learning Team

CHGN -Community Health Global Network

TSA-The Salvation Army



Process

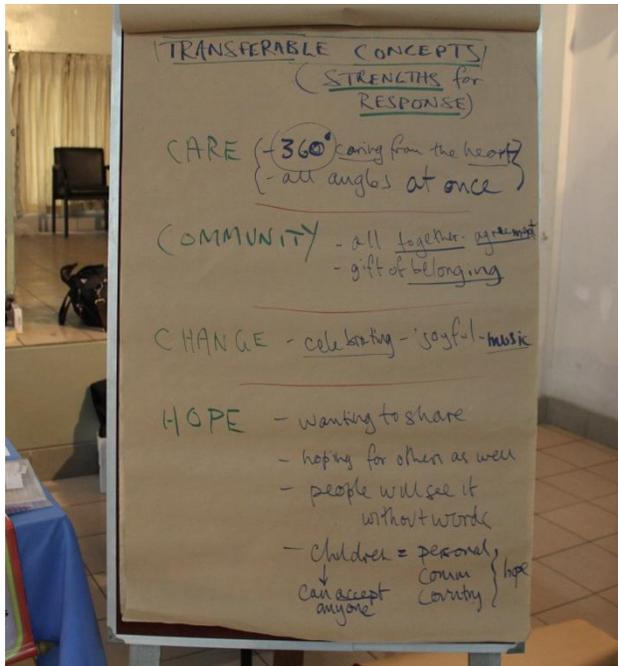


Day 1 Wednesday February 15th: CHGN Bangladesh cluster meeting begins. Salvation Army leaders Alistair and Merieke Venter lead reflection based on Mark 1:16-34, showing Jesus in home and neighbourhood, in workplace as well as the synagogue. This is why we go to community, as he did.

Day 2 Thursday February 16th: SALT visits to homes in small teams, at *Mirpur*, and *Old Dhaka*. Before leaving for the visits, human strengths for response were explored. The teams reflected together afterwards at the Mirpur SA centre, and in the vehicle on return from Old Dhaka. Each participant reflected personally, then in the context of organisations, then for the CHGN cluster. Several participants intend to make visits to each other and to try to use the SALT approach.

The Glocon team in action





Old Dhaka local community timeline: a 20 year journey into change

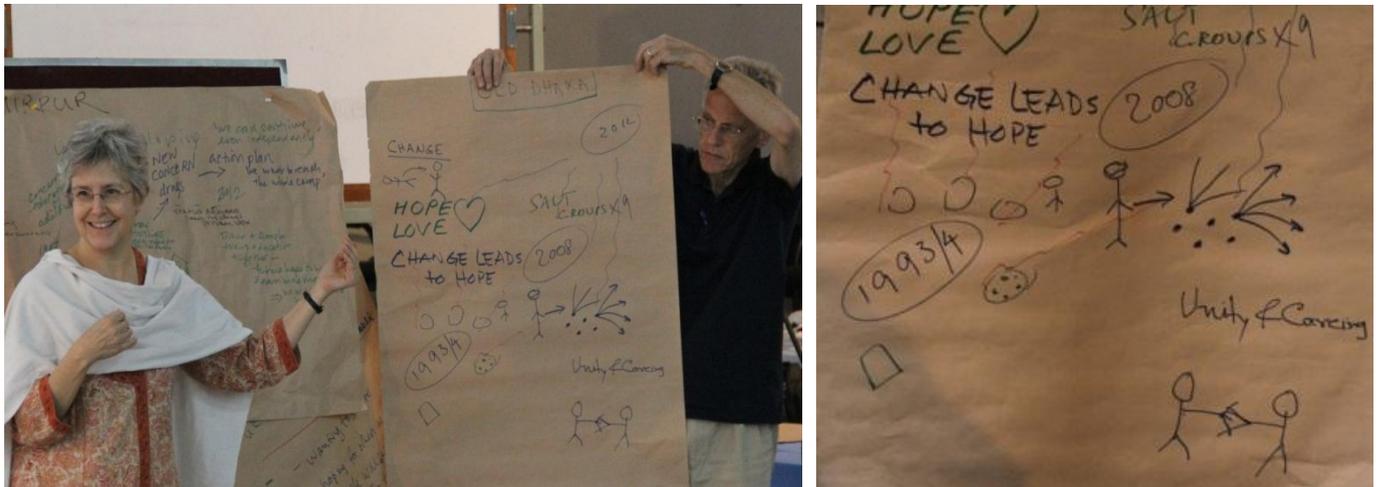


'My husband works in Kuwait. He comes back every few years. My two children aged 13 and 8 years were kidnapped two years ago because it was thought I have money. I decided to find out for myself who was behind the kidnapping. 9 months and 19 days later I had found the answer. The kidnapers were relatives. Rather than raise a police case I chose to confront them with the help of Beauty (a community health worker) from TSA. We are now in good family relationship. My neighbours helped me.'

The Old Dhaka HIV work started in 1993 with a 'community conversation' in a brothel, which has increased confidence and competence of women, their children and families in local neighbourhoods, for action on HIV prevention, people trafficking, commitment to education.

Local 'coming together' since 2008 amongst the 250 households that now comprise the area, has been closely observed by volunteer working groups for community action on health – known as 'SALT house to house' visit groups. There are now nine of these, and they intentionally seek to transfer knowledge, motivation, and action within and beyond the community. A journey of reconciliation through accompaniment has taken 18 years so far.





Four SALT teams debriefed and illustrated their core ‘headline’ on the timeline with an image of their story.

‘Woman previously in brothel, she and husband addicts; now both have changed (in picture ‘stood up again’) through skill training and opportunity.’

‘Change leads to hope. Volunteer worked with a family toward adult literacy, understanding own situation, able now to operate a small shop. Family previously not respected in area but that has changed and the family are informal leaders.’



Mirpur: interface of Bihari and Bangla communities



The Bihari have been refugees within Bangladesh since 1971. Community health and development programme has been long established in the area, TSA has a youth program from which some young people become community health volunteers. Community conversation developed into a group of women who wanted literacy education. Education for girls and women was the shared concern. Literacy groups were formed in 2010 and have been very successful.

Relationships have developed into a strong bond. *‘We are not related, but we feel like family’*



People in the community seem to respect the women who have worked and studied together. One group went to visit a father who wanted to deny his daughter an education. They discussed and persuaded him to allow her schooling.

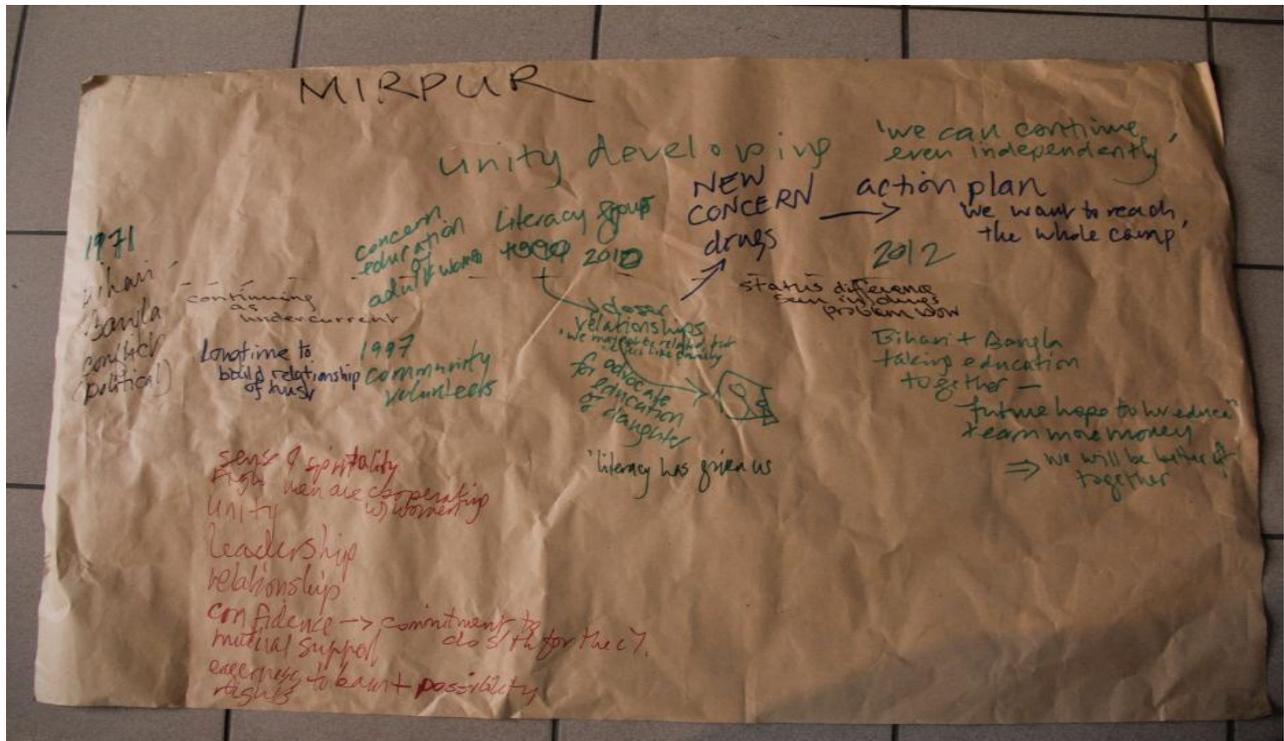
'Literacy has given us strength, and confidence to speak.'

Bangladeshis and Biharis studying together have found a kind of unity in the shared hope for a better life through education. *'We will be better off together'*

Now they want to take action about the drug traffic in the neighbourhood. Girls are sexually harassed, people who complain are threatened, robbery is too common, and they do not feel safe in their community. They know that some community leaders are involved, but they intend to combine forces of all the literacy groups, increase the members, and approach the leaders with their complaints.

'We want to reach the whole camp.'

Timeline



Three SALT teams mentioned some of the strengths seen in the homes in Mirpur:

'they have a strong sense of unity'

'relationships between neighbours, even Bengali and Bihari together'

'self confidence has developed into to a commitment to do something for the wider community'

'understanding of the rights to know and to learn'

'the women are respected, enough that men cooperate with them'

Application



Tell us a story of transformation and change, then facilitators can support better based on the change already going on.

'How do we see God working in this story? In this family? What is the spiritual meaning of these stories? Visiting teams can reflect on these questions.'



'Why is it that when we practice a SALT approach, conversation opens up in homes?'

'CHGN Cluster organizations should visit each other to learn from related work and to support each other'



Going deeper: themes and sub-themes that matter to us

Note that each visit will enable strengthened analysis of some or one main theme

Indicators of movement(s)

- Local community initiated action, self -assessment, and transfer
- Invitations back home
- Community to community transfer:
- Adaptable organizational strategies
- Spiritual and faith motivated initiative

Care to change

- Ownership
- Home, suffering, hope, neighbourhood
- Caring presence which motivates expanding change

Transfer

- Community to community
- Global SALT
- Leadership acknowledgment

Faith foundations

- Caring by being with
- God present in situation in grace

'If we do these sorts of conversations regularly (not just a one-time experience), using SALT approach, it should make a difference to us personally. What matters is a shared discovery of the healing grace of God.'

'Tell us a story of transformation and change, then facilitators can support better based on the change already going on.'

'How do we see God working in this story? In this family? What is the spiritual meaning of these stories? Visiting teams can reflect on these questions.'

Facilitation team

- Organisation transitions
- Discovering shared concerns with partners (common ground)
- Community as lifestyle
- Mentoring by participating

Learning from local experience (SALT)

- Humility of disposition and character
- Connecting local community and organizations
- Facilitating movements
- Strengths based

